

In the claims

The following amendments are made with respect to the claims in the International application PCT/GB2004/003182.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1 (Original). A method of preparing a metal salt of a medium-chain fatty acid, wherein the method comprises solubilizing at least one free fatty acid in solvent, wherein said free fatty acid has a chain length from six to twelve carbons; and reacting said free fatty acid with at least one metal salt, to produce a metal fatty acid salt.

2 (Original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the solvent comprises an alcohol.

3 (Currently amended). The method according to claim 1-~~or claim 2~~, wherein the metal salt comprises a monovalent cation or a divalent cation.

4 (Original). The method according to claim 3, wherein the metal salt comprises sodium or potassium.

5 (Original). The method according to claim 3, wherein the metal salt comprises calcium or magnesium.

6 (Currently amended). The method according to ~~any of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein the free fatty acid is reacted with at least one metal bicarbonate or at least one metal carbonate.

7 (Currently amended). The method according to ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the metal fatty acid salt is sodium or potassium caprylate.

8 (Original). The method according to claim 7, wherein the metal fatty acid salt is sodium caprylate.

9 (Currently amended). The method according to ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the metal fatty acid salt is sodium or potassium caprate.

10 (Original). The method according to claim 9, wherein the metal fatty acid salt is sodium caprate.

11 (Currently amended). The method according to ~~any of claims 1 to 10~~ claim 1, wherein the concentration of the free fatty acid in solvent is at least 0.5M.

12 (Currently amended). The method according to ~~any of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1, further comprising recovering the metal fatty acid salt by precipitation and filtration.

13 (Currently amended). A process for quantifying the purity of [[the]] a metal fatty acid salt prepared by solubilizing at least one free fatty acid in solvent, wherein said free fatty acid has a chain length from six to twelve carbons; and reacting said free fatty acid with at least one metal salt, to produce a metal fatty acid salt the method of any of claims 1 to 12, wherein the process for quantifying the purity of the metal fatty acid salt comprises separating product from reactants by High Pressure Liquid Chromatography (HPLC).